



Coalition for Fair Contracting, Incorporated



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General Services Administration
FAR Secretariat (MVR)
Attn: Laurie Duarte
1800 F. Street, NW, Room 4035
Washington, D.C. 20405

Dear Sir or Madam:

As the Executive Director of a Labor-Management Trust in the area of our nation's capital I represent several thousands of individuals who are involved in publicly funded construction. My organization welcomed the contractor responsibility regulations issued on June 30, 2000 to further define what represents "a responsible contractor"

The current Administration of President George W. Bush should do all that it can to move forward on this extremely important initiative.

Since 1992 the Coalition for Fair Contracting has been working closely with members of the executive branch of the federal government in an attempt to identify contractors who habitually are non-compliant when it comes to federal laws and regulations.

The government has in its possession tons of documentation of contractor abuse and government contracting officials want to do the right thing. The problem is that there is no central database. Each agency has documentation of wide spread abuse in their files.

But their efforts have always been a reactive response to an issue that demands a proactive approach if the government and the tax payers it represents are to get a valued end product for the billions of tax dollars that are being spent in this construction arena.

Government construction managers have known for some time that government funds are more effectively utilized if spent on contractors and subcontractors that have a history of maintaining and training a professional and dedicated work force. And take professional pride in accomplishing the task at hand by playing by the rules and obeying laws that have been on the books for decades.

These are contractors that can provide the government with a long history of completed projects that were within budget and on time. They are not "bottom line" contractors, but individuals that will insure that the government gets what they are paying for in their contracts.

The proposed regulations amend Part 9 of the Federal Acquisition Regulations. And make it very clear that a company's record of compliance with the law, (including laws that protect basic labor and employment standard, the environment and consumers) is relevant when deciding whether a company has "a satisfactory record of integrity and business ethics". Which is one of the requirements for being considered as a responsible contractor eligible to receive and work on a federal government contract.

Therefore, contracting officials need the tools to screen out those contractors that have a history of not playing by the rules? Contractors that submit unrealistic low bids knowing that they are going to cut corners on every end are not truly concerned with giving the government a valued product. These are not "Responsible Contractors."

"Labor and management working together to create a fair and level playing field"

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